

"THE STORY OF OUR LIVES FROM YEAR TO YEAR."

ALL THE YEAR ROUND

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STRANGE WATERS.

BY R. E. FRANCHILLON,

AUTHOR OF "OLYMPIA," "PEARL AND EMERALD," &c. &c.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER V. A MIDGE'S WING.

"This is Hinchford," said the curate of St. Anselm's, as he and his old college acquaintance reached the large iron gates flanked by the great stone lodge, that all the county knew.

"This is Hinchford, is it? And what are we to do now? You know the ways, I suppose? Are you certain they won't take me for a travelling photographer who wants to take the premises?"

After all, the Bohemian atmosphere of Lady Quorne in London did not follow her beyond her lodge gates into the country. At any rate, Walter Gordon felt an increase of dustiness and shabbiness as he stood before the entrance of the park and realised that he was, after all, not a vagrant painter for the time, but the invited guest of a countess; and a certain fibre of cotton in him warned him that he should have arrived at Hinchford as such, however he might have journeyed thither. It was hardly fair to Gaveston to pass the iron gates in his company; for the clergyman, though on foot, looked as if he had travelled from Deepweald in a bandbox, and had but just descended therefrom. And, be she what she will in that great world of London, where alone all men, and all women too, are just as equal as they please to make themselves, a countess is a countess in her own county.

The curate let one hand fall on one of his whiskers, and slide absently to the last hair as he let his eyes rest mildly on

the painter. It was enough for Walter Gordon—he was quick to read the slightest symptoms of the sign of a thought; no man quicker. The cotton-fibre shrank and shrivelled; the native Bohemian woof, descended to him Heaven and his great-grandfather alone knew whence, resumed its prominence, and he felt that the Reverend Reginald Gaveston was a prig, and that he had a prig at his mercy. The temptation was too strong. The curate looked so intensely respectable, so painfully spotless, so elegantly whiskered, that to disarrange him, if only to the point of one whisker tip, was the first duty of artistic and unclerical man. It is to be feared Walter Gordon had not yet learned reverence for what is reverend.

"Gaveston," he said gravely, "do you know Lady Quorne well, very well?"

"She is my first cousin—that is to say, once removed."

"Indeed? That is fortunate. Much more fortunate than I. You see what I am, Gaveston—three-quarters tramp, one-quarter painter. In fact, I'm a special type of the rolling-stone. But rolling-stones have luck now and then. You shall introduce me to Lady Quorne."

"Why, I thought you knew her?"

"Ah—in London; that's one thing. But here! Of course you don't know how a man feels, without a spare shilling in his pocket, when he finds himself on the threshold of the county families. In short, I'm an adventurer, and I feel like one. I shall enter Hinchford under your wing; you can say you knew me at Oxford, you know, and that—well, I had plenty of money to throw away."

The jest was both a good and a bad one. It was good from the point of view of the

ester with the spice of malice in him, who is still schoolboy enough to be unable to see a very clean white choker without a desire to dip a quill pen into an ink-bottle, bend it backward, and let it fly; and also from the no less malicious but more philosophical standpoint of those who like to try little experiments on human nature—more especially on that part of human nature connected with corns. Nor is it altogether a bad thing to carry a little wholesome taste for mischief into years that, as a rule, have only too little of the schoolboy. Walter Gordon felt instinctively that Reginald Gaveston had been born with an objection to introduce, as an old friend, a penniless painter-adventurer to a Countess of Quorne; and the feeling was one that acts upon an amateur Bohemian like the proverbial red rag on the proverbial bull. The true Bohemian, truly without a penny, would have sympathised with the curate rather than otherwise. But this of course the curate could not know. As for the badness of the jest—but that is obvious, and needs no explication.

The curate did look a little thoughtful. No man, however good-natured, likes to pick up by chance an old acquaintance, to whom he may some day be called upon to lend half-a-crown. And that this was the habit of painters and poets he was well assured.

"But—you are invited to Hinchford?"

The question showed so plainly what was passing in the curate's mind, and such a vista of suspicion based on a felt hat and dusty boots, that Walter Gordon's malice was disarmed.

"Gaveston," he said, "confess at once you think me an impostor—a rogue and a vagabond; that I have never been asked to Hinchford; that I only want to be; that I want you to introduce me to your cousin, the countess, as a painter—out at elbows, it is true—but worth picking up, and being patronised into genius. Never mind, old fellow—I won't trouble you. Only tell me the secret of walking in mud and dust, without a speck to show it—a man who knows that, has nothing more to learn."

"It is quite simple," said the curate simply. "I came as far as the cross-road in a fly."

Walter Gordon did look at Gaveston with some surprise. A man who has become saturated with the atmosphere of irony and badinage, when he comes in

collision with a man who knows nothing of it, is the more bewildered of the two. He had not succeeded in mystifying the curate in the least, for the latter had taken all he heard as much at the foot of the letter as if it had come from some plain-speaking citizen of Deepweald, where nobody ever thought of saying one thing in order the more clearly and pointedly to express another. But Walter Gordon spent a whole second, at least, in trying to find what metaphor, or allegory, or twist of humour the curate intended, when he capped Walter's application of clean boots to worldly knowledge by importing the idea of a fly. It was almost more than a second before he realised that the curate had really supposed that he wanted to know.

One second only. But what may not depend on a single second—on a single tick of the watch even, which is less; or a single beat of the pulse, which is less still; or a single wave of thought, which is the least conceivable measure, unless, indeed, it be the wave of a dream? The longer I live, the more prone I am to see how life demands microscopic observation before it can be comprehended in large; how it is not a great whole, divided and subdivided into infinite detail, but a mass of infinitely minute atoms, massed, in one way or another, into a more or less imperfect whole. I wonder that anyone is found bold enough to be a biographer. How can mortal man perceive, far less appreciate, the unfelt pin-prick here, the unperceived speck of dust there, that are of more lasting consequence and result than all the dramatic thunder and lightning that only serves to sweep away the lumber of accumulated pricks and specks, and to clear the air? Meanwhile the curate of St. Anselm's had told Walter Gordon that he had come from Deepweald as far as the cross-road in a fly, and Walter Gordon, being unused to dull sincerity, even in trifles, had paused a moment to find the irony in a simple observation, where the want of it had baffled him. And the moment was enough to postpone his repentance for a clumsy attempt to mystify one who was so over-easily mystified, and to bring them across Mr. Ferguson, the Scotch gardener; and then the curate said:

"Will you excuse me, Gordon? I have something to say to Mr. Ferguson about—about—"

"It will be the cucumbers, nae doot, Mr. Gaveston?"

"Ah—thank you—yes; of course, about the cucumbers," said the curate, leaping with infinite gratitude at any word that might save him from entering the house of his cousin, the countess, as Walter Gordon's godfather. "We shall meet again." And he went off with Mr. Ferguson, proud of the tact that had enabled him to put off, for at least a day, the request for the loan of five shillings, perhaps ten, that he saw ominously looming before him.

Reginald Gaveston duly followed Mr. Ferguson to the cucumber-frames. They were the question of the day, as regarded from my lord's side of the house, though, from the other side, in my lady's interest, they were not held in equal estimation. Lady Quorne was conscious of keeping too many hobbies in her own stable to find fault with those which, by being stabled in another's, were a standing excuse for her own; but the same mutual tolerance for horticulture on the one side, and for æsthetics on the other, did not find its way downstairs. Mr. Ferguson felt a real and professional zeal for the cause, and affected more; and, being a philosopher by nation, and a lecturer by nature, he gave Mr. Gaveston a lecture on the natural history of cucumbers in general that would have lasted, presumably, till the dinner-bell, had it not travelled off into a spoken treatise on his own skill in particular, and thence to the history of Jonah and theology in general—for Mr. Ferguson had been bred for the kirk, and never lost an opportunity of letting all men know that nothing short of the rankest heterodoxy had made him condescend to take double wages as a gardener. To discuss abstruse points of metaphysical divinity with an English clergyman was a chance that did not come about every day. And whether he held forth on cucumbers, or on freedom of will, the silence of Gaveston was so impressive, and suggested such unfathomable learning, that the Scot, though nearly as shrewd as he was vain, felt that for once he had found a foeman worthy of his steel.

He did not bow, but held out his hand at parting; for Lord Quorne's head-gardener was fully the equal of the curate of St. Anselm's.

"I thank ye for a most interesting conversation, Mr. Gaveston. Ye're the most enlightened minister I ever met with. Ye've assented and consented to eighteen separate rank heresies, as they call them,

in a single hour. John Knox would have burned ye where ye stand; but my lord shall give ye his best living, or my name's not Ferguson. And I'll give ye hints for sermons that'll frighten the bishops out o' their wigs, and last ye twenty year to come."

Gaveston was getting a little nervous about his visit to Hinchford. He had been especially anxious to make a good impression, and not to be claimed on the threshold as an old college friend by a penniless Bohemian, or a fellow-heretic by a disputations Scotch gardener. It was not for this he had laid out that piece of simple cunning which consisted in leaving his hired fly at the cross-road, and walking up to the house, as any gentleman might even if he kept a dozen carriages. To walk is a matter of taste; a hired fly, with a driver who might chatter to a groom, would have been a matter of imprudence, and have proved necessity. For, since the truth must be told, the Reverend Reginald Gaveston had not made the most of the advantages to which he had been born, or even of those to which his fame as a fast bowler had entitled him. He was, it is true, first cousin, once removed, to the present Lady Quorne, and he had known her when he was a boy; and what might not have happened when, he being curate of St. Anselm's, she came to live at Hinchford as the greatest lady all round Deepweald? If he had only known that his own cousin was only going to become Countess of Quorne! But then I cannot tell; Love has a way of laughing at prudence even where the most unlikely people are concerned, and I have never heard that curates are especially exempt from his laughter. Only two years before the present Lady Quorne came to the throne, he had married. That was not much in itself. But a long course of life in lodgings, of Dorcas meetings, and of a dozen and a half standing comparisons to her advantage, had led him on, by those slow steps which the heart knows so well how to make along the paths of association and opportunity, first into love, and then into marriage, with the only daughter of a land-agent in Deepweald—a most respectable man, but the reverse of such a connection as a countess would care to have at her own doors, and a Bohemian countess least of all.

Had Bessy Swann, good and nice-looking girl as she was, without a single h too many or too few, and with hands as fit to

look well in gloves as anybody's in the county, been an actress or a singer, matters might not have been so difficult to manage. There would have been a dramatic courage about such a marriage that would, or might, have gone straight to Lady Quorne's fancy. And if the girl had had no relations and no friends, or had come from anywhere but Deepweald, things might not have been insuperable. For almost any girl will pass, so long as she is an orphan with neither aunts nor uncles, and has no settled home. But for the Swanns of Deepweald to claim consinship with the Earl of Quorne was an intolerable nuisance.

And so, to simplify matters and put them on their proper footing, it was obviously the right policy to ignore, with the utmost politeness possible, the Reverend Reginald Gaveston. It was not hard, for the present Lady Quorne, unlike her predecessor, was very seldom indeed at Hinchford. When she did come, as now, at a time of year when her guests were fewest, she, with a want of good breeding of which I cannot affect to pretend the greatest and best-hearted of ladies are not on occasions as fully capable as others, invited the husband without the wife, and that without excuse or apology, to dine and sleep at Hinchford.

When Bessy Swann became Mrs. Reginald Gaveston, it must be said, to do her justice, that the exceptionally aristocratic flavour that hung about the curate of St. Anselm's had far less to do with her part in the making of the marriage than might have been expected. His connection with the Marquess of Horchester was, as it were, a painting of the lily. He had so many advantages of his own. He was a clergyman to begin with. He was a remarkably handsome clergyman, from the Deepweald standpoint. He was clever, learned, and so forth by right of profession. He read beautifully. He had some present means and fair expectations—so far as they would bear the deduction of certain old Oxford debts of which nobody knew anything but certain Oxford tradesmen. And last, but not least, to win the curate of St. Anselm's was notoriously and openly the blue ribbon of Deepweald. There is no need to speak of such trifling matters as docility and amiability, because they are not, at least popularly, supposed to be particularly meritorious in the eyes of women; but still meekness in a curate is more endurable than in a dragon.

But, not long after the engagement and shortly before the marriage—for Mr. Swann made the period of waiting short enough to be quite endurable—Miss Swann began to hear herself congratulated upon marrying into the "aristocracy," as people with titles are called in Deepweald. As Miss Hayward, who knew her peerage well, was the first to set these congratulations going, a taint of jealousy might have been suspected in less innocent circles than those of a cathedral city; but Miss Swann, and Mrs. Swann still more, took them with absolute good faith, and even began to wonder—first in hidden corners of their hearts, then by mutual understandings, and at last with scarcely shame-faced openness—whether the Marquess or the Marchioness would really take proper notice of Reginald Gaveston's bride. After all, land-agency is a profession and not a trade; and a clergyman's wife is a clergyman's wife, as much as a captain is a captain. But no present, not so much as a brooch even, arrived from the great relations, and though wedding-cards were sent, none were returned. It was a mortification, especially as Miss Hayward never failed to ask, whenever she made a morning call at the curate's little house behind the college-green, whether her dear Bessy had heard from the Marchioness lately, and what she was wearing now. But it became even worse when Reginald's own cousin became Countess of Quorne in her mature years, and came to live, or might if she pleased have come to live, at Hinchford, only fifteen miles away.

Then was poor Bessy, without feeling the least guilty of evasion or equivocation, driven to shift after shift to escape from the open confession that she had no superiority over Deepweald, in ever having seen the new Countess of Quorne; that she knew more about Eve's dress than hers; that she did not know even whether she was handsome or plain, save from the photograph that found its way into a shop-window in College-court, and which every passer-by might see. Even Reginald could not tell her; he had not seen his cousin since he was a little boy. Nor could he explain to his wife why he was left so utterly without notice, though he knew very well. He could not say: "I should have had the run of Hinchford, and welcome, if I had married almost anybody but you." And she could not say: "Why do your great relations never notice you?" They had not been married long

enough yet to have lost all sense of courtesy in their confidences.

Nevertheless, the sore rankled, as such sores will, far more than real wounds. And when, at last, a letter came directed, in an affectedly dashing hand, to "The Reverend Reginald Gaveston, Deepweald," with a real coronet and the letter Q to represent the seal, the really innocent heart of Bessy Gaveston gave a little leap; and it came to her—like what some people call a presentiment, and others, an unreasonable wish—that her first-born, her new and as yet provisionally-named Bessy, was to have a real countess for a god-mother after all. That would redeem everything. It was an invitation to Hinchford. But it was for Reginald alone, and not for her.

"I shall not go," said Reginald, mildly but decisively.

"Not go, dear—not to Hinchford?" she had felt the neglect, but was unable to distinguish between the invitation of a countess and a royal command.

"No, certainly not. They don't even mention your name."

"Perhaps they don't know you're married, dear?"

"Oh yes! They know."

Bessy began to suspect what he meant. But she was still torn by conflicting desires. Pride is a feminine as well as a masculine thing; but even in men there are few things to which pride will not yield most humbly—especially the curious quality that is called proper pride, and has been dubbed a virtue, Heaven knows why. There was nothing in being asked to Hinchford to counterbalance the curate's pride, but there was a great deal to compensate for the wound suffered by her own.

"Do you know—dear—if you don't mind—I think I should like you to go to Hinchford?"

"It is impossible, Bessy. They have treated me—"

"I know, dear. But—perhaps you don't know how it feels when Miss Hayward asks you how the countess dresses, and you have to say you don't know."

No doubt Mr. Gaveston was a little hen-pecked. So are all men who are worth anything. And at last, and not slowly, he was brought to acknowledge that for the little Bessy's sake, and perhaps for others yet to come, he ought not to run the risk of offending the Countess of Quorne; not to speak of the virtue of

forgiving injuries that, after all, might be unintentional. All these things Mrs. Gaveston impressed upon him; but "Mind and don't forget to remember to notice how she's dressed" were her very last words.

He went; and before night, all the ladies of Deepweald knew that Gaveston had at last gone to Hinchford; but that Mrs. Gaveston had not, on account of some croup-like symptoms on the part of little Bessy. Bessy the elder was not at all untruthful; the child had croup-like symptoms, and she had not gone.

Reginald Gaveston had not told Walter Gordon that it was his first visit to his cousin since her countess-ship. But it is clear why he should choose not to make it as social godfather to Walter Gordon, and should prefer the by-way of the cucumber-frames.

He reached the house without coming in collision again with his old college friend, and was told that Lady Quorne would see him in the white drawing-room. He had been in the house in former days and knew his way; but he wondered more and more, as he found it, if it could be true that a man like Walter Gordon by any sort of odd chance had found it also. He must have been an impostor—felt hats and knapsacks and their accompaniments had never found their way into Hinchford since the Mordants had been its Viscounts and Earls of Quorne. And then he thought how long it had been since he had seen his cousin Alicia, and if she had changed as much as he knew he must be since he was fifteen and she twenty-five, and he had spent a whole summer holiday at the seat of the marquess, and had thought her a vision of beauty. And then he entered the white drawing-room.

It was a large and noble room on the first floor, made for light and air, with large French windows, and hung with pictures, mostly landscapes in bright colours, with plenty of blue and green. But there was no white about it in particular, except in the person of a lady, full of figure, sombre in complexion and dress, but decorated with a most glorious parure of pearls. She reclined half lazily on a low sofa, fanning herself slowly and luxuriously. Unmindful of his promise to Bessy at home, he looked at his cousin first and at her dress afterwards; she was not the vision of beauty he remembered, as fifteen remembers five-and-twenty, but she was well preserved, and had handsome

eyes. And then came a difficulty. Should he greet her as Cousin Alicia? Would she call him Cousin Reginald? Or were they to be Mr. Gaveston and Lady Quorne?

Cousin Alicia herself solved the difficulty by rising graciously as far as a sitting posture, but no farther, closing her fan for an instant with as much expression of nothing in particular as if she had been a born Spaniard, and saying, as she fell back again in a less unconscious and therefore less graceful disposition of herself:

"Good evening, monsieur."

Bessy would have thought anything natural in high society; Gaveston, though he knew by rumours that Cousin Alicia was as full of foreign affectation as an egg of meat, thought her way of solving the difficulty ingenious, but queer.

THE MAN IN THE MOON AND HIS COMPANIONS.

AMONGST the superstitions yet lingering in the minds of mankind, none, perhaps, is more universal than that of the man in the moon. In England he is chiefly immortalised by the old nursery rhyme, but no further details are given of his proceedings. German legends are, however, more communicative, and sundry traditions relate his history, varying in different parts of the country.

A Swabian mother at Derendingen tells her child that a man was once working in his vineyard on Sunday, and after having pruned all his vines, he made a bundle of the shoots he had just cut off, laid it in his basket and went home. According to one version the vines were stolen from a neighbour's vineyard. When taxed either with Sabbath-breaking, or with the theft, the culprit stoutly protested his innocence, and finally exclaimed, "If I have committed such a crime, may I go to the moon!" After his death, this fate duly befell him, and there he remains to this day, condemned to eat molten lead as a punishment. The Black Forest peasantry say that the dark spots visible in the moon are caused by a man being spell-bound there. He stole a bundle of wood on Sunday, because he thought on that day he should be unmolested by the foresters. But he had not gone far with it when he met a stranger, who was none other than the Almighty Himself. After reproving the thief for not keeping

the Sabbath-day holy, God said he must be punished; but he might choose whether he would be banished to the sun or the moon. The man chose the latter, declaring he would rather freeze in the moon than burn in the sun, and thus the "Besenmännle" or "Broom-man" came into the moon with his faggot on his back. Some say that the Almighty set light to the faggot and it burns perpetually, in order that the bearer may not be frozen to death. At Waltenburg in the Grisons, the tale is somewhat different. A poor woman besought a "Senner" to give her a little milk, which he roughly refused to do. Thereupon she wished he might go to the coldest place in existence, which is the moon, and he is there visible with his milk-pail.

The man in the moon frequently figures in North German legends. Kuhn relates a tradition in the Havel country. One Christmas-eve a peasant felt a great desire to eat cabbage, and having none himself, he slipped into his neighbour's garden to cut some. Just as he had filled his basket, the Christ Child rode past on his white horse and said, "Because thou hast stolen on the holy night, thou shalt immediately sit in the moon with thy basket of cabbage." No sooner said than done, and the criminal is still undergoing his penalty. At Paderborn in Westphalia, the crime committed was not theft, but hindering people from attending church on Easter-day by placing a thorn-bush in the field-gate through which they had to pass.

In the neighbourhood of Wittingen, the man is said to be banished to the moon, because he tied up his brooms on Maundy Thursday; and at Deilinghofen, of having mown his meadows on Sunday.

Different versions are related in Limburg, where the man in the moon is believed to have stolen wood on Easter morning; while at Hemer in Westphalia, people say he was engaged in fencing his field on Good Friday, and had just poised a bunch of thorns on his fork, when he was at once transported to the moon. Some of the Hemer peasants declare that the moon is not only inhabited by a man with his thorn-bush and pitchfork, but likewise by a woman churning. They are husband and wife, and both broke the Sabbath, the man by fencing his field, and the woman by churning her butter, during the hours of divine service.

An ancient Northern fable states that Mâni (the Moon) kidnapped two children called Bil and Hiuki from the earth, whilst they were employed in drawing water from the well Byrgir, bearing on their shoulders the pail Sægr on the yoke Simul. These children follow Mâni, and are plainly visible from the earth.

This myth of the child-stealing Moon Man, which existed throughout the North and also in Germany, evidently received a Christian colouring in later times. The idea of the theft was retained, but the chief stress is laid on the observance of the Christian festival. The culprit does not suffer for stealing the wood, but mainly for committing the sin on the Lord's-day. This interpretation may have originated in the account in the Book of Numbers, of Moses commanding the Israelite to be stoned who had gathered wood on the Sabbath-day. Grimm says he cannot trace the exact period when the Northern fable first appeared in Germany, but he has no doubt of its great antiquity.

All nations seem to have had a curious desire to account for the spots in the moon.

According to the Hindoos, Chandras, the God of the Moon, bears a hare in his arms. The Mongolians also believe that the spots represent a hare. One of their deities transformed himself into a hare to feed a starving wayfarer; and in honour of this act of virtue the figure of a hare was thenceforth visible in the moon. The natives of Ceylon have a somewhat similar legend. When Buddha sojourned as a hermit on earth, he one day lost his way in a forest, and after long wanderings he met a hare, who thus addressed him, "I can help thee. Do thou take the right-hand path, and I will guide thee out of this wilderness."

"I thank thee," returned Buddha, "but I am poor and starving, and am unable to requite thy kindness."

"If thou art hungry," replied the hare, "light a fire, kill and eat me."

Buddha lighted a fire as desired, and the hare immediately leaped in; but Buddha now displayed his supernatural powers, and, tearing the hare from the flames, he placed it in the moon, where it still abides. This story is related by a French traveller in Ceylon, and he adds that his telescope was often borrowed by the natives, in order that they might inspect the hare in the moon.

Chaucer describes the moon as Lady Cynthia:

Her gite was gray and full of spottis blake,
And on her brest a chorle paintid ful even
Bearing a bush of thornis on his bake
Which for his theft might climb no ner the heven.

Shakespeare also alludes to the man in the moon in *The Tempest* and *The Midsummer Night's Dream*.

According to one tradition, the figure is that of Isaac, bearing the faggot on his shoulders for his own sacrifice on Mount Moriah. Another calls the man, "Cain with a bundle of briars." Dante mentions this both in his *Paradiso* and *Inferno*. There is a pretty mediæval legend which describes the moon as St. Mary Magdalene, and the spots on it as her repentant tears.

The following Westphalian legends are evidently not of Christian origin. A youth, visiting his sweetheart at night, wished to enter her room by the window, while the moon was shining brightly. He, therefore, took a bramble with which he attempted to darken it; but he remained hanging to the thorn-bush.

A tipsy man, coming out of the public-house, threatened the moon with a bramble he held in his hand. This audacious conduct enraged the moon, who drew the man up, and there he is to this day.

Müllenhoff says that the people of Rantum, in the Schleswig island of Sylt, declare that the man in the moon is a giant, who bends down at full tide to scoop up the water and pour it on the earth. At low tide he stands upright, resting from his labours, so that the water may subside.

We now come to the superstitions attached to the power of the moon, and prominent amongst them is the idea that no work may be undertaken in moonshine. The Swabian people consider it a great sin to spin, or knit by moonlight, as though one could not do enough by day. That is the reason why the moon does not give sufficient light for any work. Whoever ventures to spin, for example, weaves a rope for the neck of some relation. There are several stories illustrating the danger of transgressing this rule.

A poor woman at Brackenheim, in Swabia, gained her livelihood by spinning, and her diligence was so great that she spent whole nights at her distaff; in order to save the expense of oil, she never lighted her lamp when there was a full moon. As she thus sat spinning in the

moonshine, and the church-clock was tolling the hour of midnight, the door opened and a strange man entered. He had his arms full of distaffs and said: "If thou dost not spin all these full this night, it will be all over with thee, and I shall come and fetch thee." With these words he vanished, leaving the woman in a terrible fright. Luckily she bethought herself of merely spinning the distaffs once over, and in this way she completed her task before daybreak. The stranger, who was the devil himself, reappeared at the appointed time and silently took the spindles away with him. But never again did the woman spin by moonlight.

A similar tale is told at Tübingen, only there the evil one manifested his displeasure at being balked of his prey by leaving such an odour of brimstone behind him, that no one could live in the room for the next six months. A maiden of Pfullingen was knitting at midnight by moonshine, when an apparition appeared at the window, offering her knitting-needles, on which she immediately threw down her work and fled from the room.

Schönwerth says that the peasants of the Upper Palatinate never leave their carts or agricultural implements out of doors when the moon is shining, as its beams would break them. For the same reason, linen must not be left hanging in the moonshine, and superstitious folks always warn their friends against sleeping in the moonlight, and bathing, or drinking from any fountain or well, on which the rays of the moon fall. It is also unsafe to dance by moonlight, because the surface of the earth is then as thin as cobweb, and the spirits underground are lured upwards by the music. The moon is likewise said to blacken the complexion, to promote the decay of fish and meat, and even to blunt the edge of razors.

The precepts concerning the phases of the moon are very numerous. Throughout Germany, except in Tyrol, where the contrary rule prevails, hair must be cut as the moon increases. Eggs laid in the first quarter of the moon are good to eat and for setting, but those laid in the last quarter will never produce chickens. Cattle, poultry, and shellfish are all fatter when the moon is full. Rye must be sown as the moon waxes, but peas, barley, and wheat when it wanes.

Weddings ought always to be solemnised during the new moon, otherwise the mar-

riage will be unfortunate; and every peasant in East Prussia, Pomerania, and Hesse avoids if possible being married during the last quarter of the moon. But washing, chopping firewood, and killing pigs may be done at that period. Indeed, the Servian women positively refuse to wash any clothes in the first quarter of the moon, as they declare the whole of the linen would be creased and be soon torn.

The moon plays a great part in popular remedies, sympathetic cures, &c., despite, or perhaps because, its light is believed to be poisonous.

The Tyrolese cure freckles by washing them at night with water in which the moon shines. In the Harz Mountains and Silesia, the remedy for goitres is to turn one's face to the increasing moon three evenings running, then take a stone, silently touch the swelling with it, and throw it over the left shoulder. Meier quotes a Swabian charm for toothache. When the crescent moon reappears for the first time, the sufferer must gaze at it steadfastly and repeat thrice: "I see the moon with two points; my teeth shall neither shoot nor ache, until I see the moon with three points."

Crabs caught during full moon, and then burnt alive and ground to powder, cure hydrophobia. Of course the moon necessarily assists at all deeds of sorcery, such as casting magic bullets, the manufacture of a divining-rod, and the like.

The following recipe for avenging oneself on one's enemies is given by Kuhn in Westphalia: "When the new moon falls on a Tuesday, go out before daybreak to a stake selected beforehand, turn to the east and say, 'Stick, I grasp thee in the name of the Trinity.' Take thy knife and say, 'Stick, I cut thee in the name of the Trinity, that thou mayest obey me and chastise anyone whose name I mention.' Then peel the stick in two places, to enable thee to carve these words: *Abia, obia, sabia*. Lay a smock-frock on thy threshold and strike it hard with the stick, at the same time naming the person who is to be beaten. Though he be many miles away, he will suffer as much as if he were on the spot."

The ancient Greeks and Romans considered the moon to be a protection against the evil eye, and they hung small moons made of metal round their necks as amulets. Even the wives and horses of the Romans wore them. The custom has not yet disappeared in Italy and the East.

Some years ago Neapolitan ladies used to wear small silver half-moons on their arms, as a preservative against epilepsy, which popular belief has always connected with the evil eye. The talismanic crescent has ever been the badge of Islam, and it still glitters on the minarets.

Before quitting our subject we must add a few traditions respecting the other denizens of the sky, for although the man in the moon is the chief hero of celestial legendary lore, his companions in the firmament are by no means ignored.

Much less superstition is attached to the sun than the moon. Plants possessing magical properties must be gathered, if not by moonlight, yet at any rate before sunrise, for the first appearance of his rays immediately dispels all enchantment, and drives back the spirits to their subterranean abodes. Twice a year the sun changes its course—descending in summer, ascending in winter. In pagan times both the summer and winter solstice were seasons of great festivity.

Swabian people believe that on Easter Day, or as some say on Ascension Day, the rising sun leaps thrice for joy. At Rotenburg, on the Neckar, the sun is supposed to perform these antics on Christmas Eve, the period of the winter solstice. On Good Friday the sun mourns over the crucifixion, and does not shine until three o'clock in the afternoon. In some parts of Upper Swabia, public prayers are still offered up after an eclipse. The appearance of three suns denotes war; they are only visible at sunrise and differ in size. The largest gains the day, practically and metaphorically. At Herbrechtingen these suns have frequently been seen, and such was the case just before Napoleon's Russian campaign. The largest sun was in the northern direction, and that is why the Russians won.

The sun is obliged to shine for a short time, at least, every Sunday, in order that the Blessed Virgin may dry her veil. Three Saturdays in the year, on which she mourns, the sun does not shine at all.

The stars also played no small part in heathen mythology. According to popular belief they are favourable or unfavourable to mankind, depending on the constellation under which each human being is born. There was a pious custom of saluting the stars before retiring to rest, or else repeating a prayer on the appearance of the evening star. Whoever points at a star puts out the eyes of an angel. The "Edda"

describes the stars as fiery sparks, which floated about in the air until their places were appointed for them by the gods.

Falling stars are weighty omens, and whoever beholds one ought to repeat a prayer. In Tyrol and elsewhere, it is believed that any wish, expressed whilst a star falls, will be fulfilled; a treasure lies where it falls. The Lithuanian myth connects falling stars with the Fates. Werpeja, the spinner, begins to weave the thread of each newly-born human being in the sky, and each thread terminates in a star; when death approaches a man, his thread breaks and the star fades and falls.

A comet is prophetic and generally presages evil. The Tyrolese call it "God's Rod," and say that its import may be learned from its colour. Red signifies war and misery, but, if the light be clear and bright, it portends peace and happiness.

The Milky Way usually goes in Swabia by the name of "Jacob's Ladder," or "Heaven's Ladder." The angels still descend on the earth by it, as Jacob saw in his dream, but they are not visible to everyone.

The Great Bear probably owes his name of "Wain" to Paganism. It is said that at midnight the chariot turns with a mighty rumbling. The Swabian peasantry believe that it drives to Jerusalem every night; whilst the Swiss have a superstition that if it be low in the sky bread will be cheap, if the contrary it will be dear. Grimm is of opinion that the chariot belonged to Wuotan, as being the chief of the gods, although an old Swedish chronicle attributes the Swedish name "Karl Wagen," our English "Charles's Wain," to Thor; but Grimm adds that many Wuotan legends were applied to the Frankish Emperor Charles the Great. The cities of Antwerp and Groningen have the constellation of Ursa Major or Minor on their municipal seals. The small star, scarcely visible above the middle one in the pole of the chariot, has its own legend, and is called "Hans Dümken" in North Germany. It is said that he once drove our Lord, who in return promised he should go to heaven; but the man replied he would rather drive throughout eternity, and his wish was granted. Most likely this is founded on some heathen tale of Wuotan's charioteer.

Orion, as the Greeks called the belt of glittering stars, has several German names. In some parts the three stars are called the "Three Mowers," and the

Rhineland name is "The Rake." The Swabians say it is Moses's staff with which he divided the Red Sea, and other names are "Jacob's Staff" and "St. Peter's Staff."

In Germany, the Pleiades are almost universally known as "The Hen," because the foremost star is supposed to resemble a hen leading her brood of chickens. There is a curious legend of the origin of these stars. Our Lord once passed a baker's shop, and perceiving a strong odour of new bread, He sent in one of His disciples to ask for a loaf. The baker refused, but his wife, who was standing a little way off with her six daughters, was more compassionate and secretly bestowed the loaf, for which good deed she and her daughters were transferred to the firmament as seven stars. The baker was changed into a cuckoo, and the Pleiades are always visible as long as the cuckoo calls in the spring.

The appearance of the rainbow in the sky gave rise to many mythological conceptions. The "Edda" describes it as the heavenly bridge Bifröst, traversed by the gods. It is the best of all bridges, and is strongly constructed of three colours; nevertheless when the end of the world comes, it will break down while the sons of Muspell are driving over it. Its end reaches to Himinbiörg, the abode of Heimdall, and Heimdallr guards it against the giants, lest they should penetrate into heaven.

According to popular belief, the extremities of a rainbow always touch streams, whence it draws water, by means of two large golden dishes. That is why it rains for three days after the appearance of a rainbow, because the water must fall again on the earth. Whoever arrives at the right moment at the spot where the rainbow is drinking, can take possession of the golden dish, which reflects all the colours of the rainbow; but if nobody is there the dishes are again drawn up into the clouds. Some say that the rainbow always lets a dish fall. This once happened at Reutlingen, in Swabia. It broke in several pieces, but the finder received a hundred gulden for it. At Tübingen, people used to run to the end of the rainbow, which appeared to be resting over the Neckar or the Steinlach, to secure the golden dish. Usually it is considered wrong to sell the dish, which ought to be kept as an heirloom in the family, for it brings good luck. A shepherd in the Swabian Alp once found such a dish, and

he never afterwards lost a sheep. An unfortunate native of Heubach, who sold the treasure at a high price, was struck dumb on the spot. Small round gold coins, marked with a cross or star, are frequently found in Swabia, and the peasants declare that these were manufactured from the rainbow dishes by the Romans when they invaded Germany. In the Black Forest, the rainbow uses a golden goblet, which is afterwards dropped. A shoe thrown into a rainbow comes back filled with gold. The Servians have a theory that passing beneath a rainbow changes the sex—men become women and vice versa.

When a double rainbow is seen, Swabian peasants say that the devil would like to imitate the rainbow, but he cannot succeed. The Esthonians call the rainbow "The Thunder-god's Sickle."

A theory existed in the Middle Ages that the rainbow would cease to appear a certain number of years before the Last Judgment, and Hugo von Trimberg, in an old German poem, mentions forty years as the prescribed time; but this supposition is not alluded to in any ecclesiastical works.

The Lithuanians have a quaint legend respecting the rainbow. When their chief god Pramzimas was looking out of the window and beheld the whole earth full of wars and wickedness, he despatched two giants, named Wandu and Wejas (Water and Wind), to the sinful world, who destroyed everything for twenty days and twenty nights. While engaged in eating heavenly nuts, Pramzimas gazed on the scene of desolation below, and he threw down a nutshell, which fell on the summit of the highest mountain, where a few men and women and some animals had fled for refuge. All got into the nutshell, which floated on the waves of the now universal flood. The god then looked on the earth for the third time. He allayed the tempest and bade the waters subside. The human beings who had been saved all dispersed, excepting a few couples who remained in that part, and became the ancestors of the Lithuanians in the following manner. As old age crept upon them they sorrowed greatly at their probable extinction, so in order to comfort them Pramzimas sent the rainbow, who advised them to leap over the bones of the earth. Nine times did they perform this feat, and thence sprang nine couples, males and females, from whom the nine Lithuanian tribes are descended.

SOUTHERNWOOD.

Alas! how seldom now are seen
These slender spikes of fragrant green,
In garden beds and bowers;
Fair, weaving hands no longer choose
A single homely spray to use
With favoured modern flowers.

Its bushy greenness used to lend
Our childish nosegays grace, and blend
With older-fashioned blooms;
We mixed it with the dark heartsease,
With cabbage-roses, pinks, sweet-peas,
All rich with quaint perfumes.

We used it in the posies sweet,
Fresh-plucked on May-day morns to greet
Our modest village queen;
It mingled with the flowers that lay
Upon the hawthorn-shaded way,
Towards the daisied green.

The bride's shy foot trod lightly o'er
Its tufts, as through the holy door
She passed to matronhood;
And on the silent churchyard bed,
Where sleep our best-beloved dead,
We planted southernwood.

But now it springs unseen, unknown,
Till hands grown feeble, like mine own,
All trembling pull a spray;
As I pull this with tearful eyes,
And thronging memories that arise
Of life's lost dawning day.

I have been happy, and God knows
Not one of all my later woes
Can blot the blissful past!
I have been happy, and I say,
Of all my pleasures passed away,
I knew they could not last.

I had my share of sun and shower,
I had my little day of power,
I queened it with the best;
Now far from worldly blame and praise,
My feet are set in quiet ways
Of calm content and rest.

I pass the red rose on its spray,
And in my hand I hold to-day
A twig of southernwood;
It tells me I am not bereft,
It whispers that I yet have left
The power of doing good.

It glads the poor man's garden yet,
And poor men's eyes are often wet
With tears that I might stay;
I choose a humble, helping part;
I take thy teaching to my heart,
My green, old-fashioned spray!

BY THE RIVERSIDE.

DWELLERS IN TENTS.

MR. CHARLES DARWIN, who, whatever the precise value of the theory of evolution may be, is the most painstaking and candid of philosophers, has dwelt, especially in his later works, with much weight upon the vigour and permanence of inherited peculiarities, and has also made manifest—although the facts pointed out are adverse to his theory—the tendency of cultivated varieties of plants and animals to revert to the original wild types from

which they are descended. No lover of historical portraits is ignorant of the Ashley nose; of the striking resemblance of the Berkeleys to their ancestors, dead and gone five hundred years ago, whose features are preserved in stone and in brass in the chapel at Berkeley Castle; of the peculiar Cavendish under jaw, less in degree but similar in kind to that inherited by the Hapsburgs from their Tyrolese ancestress, Margaret Pocket-mouth. Every pigeon-fancier knows that birds of the best strains will at times "throw back," and produce a brood showing distinctly the bars on the wing which mark descent from the blue rock. There is no amateur of horse-racing but can tell all about the Whalebone white hairs which descended through Kingston to Caractacus, and through Windhound to Thormanby. I am not sure that I am not guilty of a piece of gross irreverence in comparing ordinary human beings with Derby winners, but must candidly confess that civilised mankind occasionally exhibit a strange tendency to revert to peculiarities of the primeval savage. When I see a group of Italian women and girls carrying great baskets full of farm produce on their backs, while a male creature saunters by their side, carrying nothing heavier than a rake, I cannot help thinking of my friends Sitting Bull and Spotted Tail, who, during the frequent migrations of their tribes, would scorn to set a hand to any such servile work as building a wigwam or carrying a bundle of buffalo-robos. My remembrance of those eminent braves, and their treatment of their womankind, is also kept fresh and green by my witnessing the anxiety of the Lancashire Lad to marry a "fower-loomer," and his tendency to let her work her four looms while he indulges in the noble sports of rabbit-coursing and dog-fighting; thus keeping her up to her four-loom power without any greater encouragement than an occasional thrashing on Saturday nights. Likewise it is gratifying to a theorist of my "stripe," when I read an account of a scion of a noble family—a sometime Eton boy, a scholar, and soldier—seizing his young wife by her long fair hair, dragging her into the kitchen, and then and there cutting off her blonde curls with a meat-chopper!

Everywhere, in fact, I see traces of occasional reversion to primeval types; and of these none is more amusing than the recent craze for "camping-out," as

it is called—obviously the proof of a latent craving in man to run "wild in woods," if he only get the chance. I think the mania first broke out in the United States, where it owed its early development to the camp-meetings held by the multitudinous sects into which American Christianity is subdivided. Enthusiastic persons who tried camping-out discovered, or imagined, that they came home, after a few days' or weeks' life under canvas, refreshed and invigorated both in body and in mind. The medical faculty pounced upon this new experience of life at once, and recommended "camping-out" as a cure for all imaginable ills, consumption included. It was discovered that a "return to a more natural mode of life" was all that was required to patch up stomach and brain, enfeebled by a long course of hot bread and cocktails. The climate of the States—hot and tolerably settled during the summer months—favoured the experiment, and persons of other than a serious turn of mind tried camping-out, as a restorative from the dissipation of New York City. Three young gentlemen, friends of the present writer, went to the Adirondacks, mainly to "camp out," they said, but with minor views as to shooting, fishing, and other pastimes. In addition to a tent and hammocks they took with them a choice assortment of firearms and fishing-tackle, a formidable wardrobe of shooting and fishing attire, a negro servant called Pearl, a cartload of champagne, several gallons of Bourbon whisky, and several hundred packs of cards. They enjoyed themselves very much indeed, barring the stifling heat and the legions of mosquitoes; they shot a few deer and caught a few trout, they drank all the liquid "provant," used up all the packs of cards, and the poorest of the three won twenty thousand dollars. So everybody was happy and strong and healthy, and the way these young gentlemen ate, aye, and drank, on their return to New York City was a sight to see.

As the average Englishman has taken to imitate American sayings and doings—very clumsily and foolishly, by-the-way—he has been prompt to follow our cousins in their return to savage life, fulfilling also his natural and inherited bent thereby. There is much camping-out in the Thames valley during our short summer, and this new fashion has developed a new kind of being—the Aquatic Bedouin. He is another creature from the steam-launcher,

who as a rule gets over so much ground, or rather water, in a day, that he has little need for camps. Nor does the Aquatic Bedouin resemble in the least the old-fashioned oarsman, who was wont to row the full length of the course from the Folly-bridge at Oxford to Westminster-bridge, or eke to Whitehall-stairs—who attired himself in white ducks, wellington boots, and a white beaver hat; who wore embroidered braces, slipped over his shoulders while actually at work, and who would have scorned the notion of living "like a set of infernal gipsies, sir." His successor, who, instead of rowing the course just indicated in a "six-oared wherry" against time, made Putney rejoice and Henley stare at his pace over two or three miles in an outrigger, would never have dreamt of "camping-out" while the Thames abounded with pleasant inns, not yet overcrowded. If he undertook to "paddle down" the river he took good care to secure quarters at The Lamb at Wallingford, at The Miller of Mansfield at Goring, or The Swan at Streatley, and so on, and enjoyed himself heartily. But the dweller in tents is a man of another kind, who enjoys himself in his own way. As a rule, the Aquatic Bedouin provides himself with a large roomy boat at some point of the river accessible by railway, and, starting thence, halts by the riverside at his favourite haunts. His boat generally carries a considerable freight. In addition to the tent, on the construction of which the comfort of the expedition depends, there must be sheets of waterproof to guarantee against damp, or, still better, hammocks to sling clear of earth altogether; there must be camp-kettles and patent cooking-stoves. As brushwood is not adapted to the capacity of patent stoves, it is well to carry a small stock of fuel, and those who yearn after the fleshpots of Egypt do well to load their boxes and hamper with a goodly store of "tinned things"—to wit, curried chicken, pickled salmon, Brunswick sausage, sardines, and so forth—which, with a ham and such supplies as can be bought in the villages near the river, ought to make the commissariat reasonably efficient. It is not prudent to count too much on country markets during the two, or at most, three months suited for camping-out. Bread can be had as a rule, but butchers' meat is apt to be scarce. It is not amusing—at least, to ordinary persons—to go without dinner; and this is an event

very likely to occur to those who rely on their skill in foraging. Meat is to be got of course at Reading, at Maidenhead, at Abingdon, Twyford, and so forth; but the smaller places are, at times, both steakless and chopless. These facts are pretty well known to practised campers-out, who invariably provide themselves with a sheet-anchor in the shape of a fitch of bacon, plenty of tea and coffee, biscuits and tobacco. The Aquatic Bedouin has a keen but peculiar sense of enjoyment, and beyond a certain loudness and tendency to horse-play is not a very evilly-disposed person. Possibly I am fastidious, but I cannot quite appreciate the advantage of camping-out to the fair sex. I daresay it is healthy when it does not rain, but it does not occur to me that "roughing it" ever improved womankind to any appreciable extent. Moreover, the Bedouins have a knack of collecting in certain spots, and their gathering provokes loud and rough jesting, of the kind designated in London, "chaff," and by no means fitted for female ears. There is at times too much of this in the meadows by Cookham and Goring, and in the woods by Marlow, hard by the bridge under which the historic puppy-pie is said to have been eaten. But despite his few shortcomings, the Bedouin unquestionably adds a picturesque element to the scenery—that is, just as night is coming on. Then his camp-fires glow through the wood with excellent effect, and his tents, glittering here and there in the moonlight like wandering ghosts, suggest reminiscences of that Lady Hoby who is still supposed to haunt a bedroom in Bisham. "Thei seyn" that a "figure so tall," dressed in the coif, weeds, and wimple of a knight's widow of the Tudor period, appears at dead of night, with a self-supported basin moving before her, in which she is perpetually trying to wash her hands. This apparition, which appears always, as photographers would say, in the negative—that is, the black part white and the white part black—may perhaps have suggested to Shakespeare the night-walk of Lady Macbeth. The crime of Lady Hoby was not so great as that of Lady Macbeth, for she was only guilty of killing a naughty boy. Her son, on evidence apparently indisputable—for his copy-books have been discovered—never wrote a line without making a blot. His mother, a literary woman and joint preceptress of Queen Elizabeth, chastised young William Hoby again and again, but

in vain, till one day she beat him that he died. Poor Lady Hoby—boys are very trying!

Others beside the Aquatic Bedouin have their favourite haunts on the Thames. I confess to a lingering liking for stagnant, weed-choked, drowsy Abingdon, whither the Ock descends from the vale of White Horse. It is pleasant to "moon" in this old town, which grew up around the mighty abbey and survived the ecclesiastical institution of which the Abingdon Chronicle is the sole important relic. According to this same chronicle the Abbots of Abingdon were great folk in their day, and quarrelsome and politic withal, for the last of the race surrendered his abbey with such good grace that he secured the manor of Cumnor for himself. But now the bare thought of Abingdon on a hot afternoon is enough to send one to sleep. Frivolous persons are at liberty to enjoy their picnics at Nuneham over the way, and welcome; but to me dear old sunny, sluggish Abingdon is worth all the parks and trim gardens in the world.

There may be recalcitrants with regard to Abingdon, but there are none against Goring and Streatley, the charming twin villages of Oxfordshire and Berkshire, connected by the double bridge with the island in mid-stream. From the railway station at Goring it is delightful to stroll through the most charming of villages overgrown with flowers. As I draw near to The Miller of Mansfield, I pass by a beershop with a curious sign, purporting to represent "A Briton," the said typical islander being portrayed with a man's head, but a beer-barrel body, encircled with an ear of barley. The Miller of Mansfield itself—well known to the brethren of the brush—is almost overgrown with white convolvulus, roses pink and roses yellow, bushy clematis, shining ivy, and grape-laden vine. There is a man sitting in the window and making a sketch, and a young lady is skirmishing with water-colours in the next house. There is a great heavy-towered church at Goring, and I love to pause on the bridge to look upon it, and also upon that particularly fishful bit of water, labelled Private, which runs past the mill between banks of forget-me-nots. It is a stiff pull up the hill through Streatley to the downs, but over them the outlook is glorious, over the winding, shining river on the one side, and the Berkshire downs on the other. Borne on the west wind are

the pungent odours of yew and juniper, and, to the wanderer endowed with memory and fancy, a faint odour, as it were, of the distant stable. It is a pastoral country hereabouts, a part of tranquil, agricultural, Saxon Wessex, peopled with kindly folk, courteous and genial, honest and industrious, but shrewd withal, and possessed by a strange mania for poaching—regarded from Reading to Yeovil rather as a sport than a crime. To call a man a poacher anywhere on this line of country, is to convey no idea of moral reprobation. The Wessex man “owns up” in a popular song, that it is his “delight, of a shiny night, at the season of the year,” to make short work of the squire’s hares and pheasants. I take this expression of his views as a manifestation of his shrewdness, for unless the few poachers I have had the pleasure of for gathering with deceived me, a dark night is more favourable to them than a “shiny” one. An additional element of shrewdness is communicated to the natives of the Berkshire, Hampshire, and Wiltshire downs, all lying, as the O’Mulligan would say, “over there,” from the top of Streatley-hill, just now as slippery as only chalk recently rained upon can be, by the racing stables with which they are sprinkled. Trudging over these hills the unsophisticated traveller plumps now and then upon establishments which are not ambitious enough for country seats, and far too—I regret to write this, but it is true—far too neatly and beautifully prim in their exquisite order and cleanliness to be farms. The quality of the turf has had something to do with attracting them to these downs, but in all probability their loneliness much more. The first man who planted a racing-stable in this part of the country was Butcher Cumberland, who built an immense breeding and training establishment at Cat’s Gore, not far from Ilsley. The stables are gone now; but they can never be forgotten, for at Cat’s Gore was bred the celebrated Eclipse. Ilsley and Russley, Lambourne and Kingsclere, have sent out many worthy successors of that famous racer. “When shall the glory fade” of Teddington and Thormanby, of Lord Lyon and Doncaster—equine monarchs illustrious, both by race and achievement? The names of the little hamlets dotted here and there over the wide expanse of downs are perpetually reminding one of the stud-book, as Sydmon-ton, Liddington, and so forth. There is yet another sport than horse-racing, held

in high honour on these breezy uplands. It is but a morning’s walk from Streatley-hill, where I am standing, to East Ilsley and Scutehamore, the highest point of the Berkshire downs; and thence the ancient Ridgeway leads right into the Ashdown coursing country. Ashdown-park, so remotely situated that it looks as if it dropped down from the sky, is said to have been built, on the site of a farmhouse, by Sir William Craven, sometime Lord Mayor of London, who fled thither from the plague. Wherever a greyhound is seen, there is the name of Ashdown revered as the finest coursing-ground in the world. An immense range of open downs is favourable of course to the sport; but this is not all. The upland hares which abound in this favoured spot are of a variety remarkable for size, strength, and fleetness, bearing generally about as much resemblance to a plump specimen of the Norfolk kind, as a trained athlete to an alderman; and the long-tails must be of sterling breed, and in prime condition, to live the pace with Ashdown “puss.” Ashdown has historic as well as coursing fame. Either there, or “somewhere about,” or on Uffington-hill, where the White Horse is cut through the green turf into the chalk underneath, King Alfred won or lost a battle with the Danes, and the White Horse was engraved on the hill-side in honour of that, or more probably, of some earlier feat of arms, or perhaps as a superstitious observance! This is what the “gentle antiquary” has brought King Alfred to in the centre of his dominions, and within hail of Wantage, where a statue was recently set up in remembrance of him! Despite incredulity and uncertainty, however, there is what my friend Professor Nebelwitz would call an “Alfredismus” about these chalk hills. There is the blowing-stone, “King Aalfard’s boogie harn,” King Alfred’s thorn, his palace, or rather, the site thereof, his well, and a great deal more of the Saxon warrior and law-giver than need be discussed in this place.

Turning once more towards the Thames, I descend through a delightful lane bordered by great Berkshire hedgerows, studded with wild flowers—dog-roses sprawling in wild luxuriance, blooming nettle, and purple marshmallow, a great wealth of wild mint, and light yellow charlick. As the wild flowers come to an end at the entrance of the village, their place is supplied by rose and clematis hanging over the cottage doors, and great banks

of nasturtiums running riot in the gardens. There are two shoemakers at Streatley, probably rivals in business; certainly, in horticulture. Their little houses are literally buried under rose, clematis, and convolvulus, against which a vine struggles desperately to hold its own. The red roofs of Streatley and Goring give the inexpressible charm of colour to the richly-wooded scene. As the rain just now is coming down smartly, I ensconce myself in that home of the angler, The Swan, famous for the tenderness of its chickens and the good-humour of host and hostess. The Swan is built, as it should be, on the edge of the river just above the long bridge. As I sit in the low-roofed little parlour, and watch the sun start through the clouds as a light breeze chases the shower before it, the scene recalls with marvellous fidelity the Island of Shalott, where

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
Little breezes dusk and shiver,
Thro' the wave that runs for ever
By the island in the river,
Flowing down to Camelot.

There are the willows and the island, the "space of flowers," purple, white, and yellow, the great burdocks, and the waving reeds. The "four gray walls and four gray towers" are not there, of course, the only building on the island being the toll-house, and the only representative of Sir Lancelot is a lazy artist, who is catching gudgeons while he should be sketching a "sympathetic" sky. From the bridge at Streatley it is pleasant to drop down stream to Pangbourne, over a magnificent reach of water fringed by deep banks of water-plants, tall purple loosestrife, tiny forget-me-not, and snowy meadow-sweet. Beyond these stretch meadows full of kine, and above, on the hill-side, are fields of stubble and woods. Hardly less beautiful than Streatley and Goring, are Pangbourne and Whitchurch. Just where the stream rushes over the weir, is a little fishing inn and angler's rest, where I have enjoyed many pleasant tranquil mornings in the old wicked time when there was horse-racing at Reading. Perhaps the contrast between the feverish excitement of the race-course, and the calm pursuit of gudgeon and perch under the mighty poplars, which rear their tall graceful shafts above the humble pollard willows, heightened the sense of enjoyment; but there is no doubt as to the supreme luxury of a "header" off the camp-shedding into the swirling, sparkling water—a

plunge bracing the nerves for the less healthy afternoon's "plunging" in another place. I cannot recollect the time when there was not a big trout lurking about Pangbourne, either in the river or in the imagination of mine host of The Angler's Rest, whose wife's cookery, so far as chops and eggs and bacon were concerned, was above all praise. After nearly a dozen years' absence, I pull down the reach to Pangbourne, and am amazed to find the place exactly as I left it—the Temperance Hotel, as we used to call the licenseless "Rest," and the little Swan Inn next door for those whose unholy tastes require something stronger than tea to "make the fish bite" withal. There is a thrill of excitement in the little parlour of The Swan, for a couple of rare fish caught this morning lie gasping on the table, like a piscatorial conundrum to the 'prentice angler driven in by the rain. One jaunty youth pronounces them to be "bronze roach;" another young gentleman airily dubs them "tench;" an unmistakable cockney maintains that they are "Thames carp;" while another mutters something about "golden bream." They are really very fine "rudd," fishes more often talked and written about than caught, their capture on the present occasion having been effected by a professional fisherman. The metallic gleam on their plump sides and handsome red fins excites unbounded admiration, and every angler present sighs to think they have not fallen to his rod, as they would "look beautiful stuffed." It is a droll notion this of stuffing fish and putting them into glass cases, instead of eating them. Perhaps the enthusiast who, towards the end of his angling career, has his hall and study well lined with stuffed fish, experiences a species of solemn joy in contemplating them; but this extraordinary mental condition can only be guessed at by ordinary mortals. Nevertheless, the sentiment of the company is so distinctly pronounced in favour of stuffing the brace of handsome rudd, that I am ashamed to make the proposition lurking in my unregenerate mind to have them cooked for my dinner, and am fain to fall back upon mutton-chops. The angler and his haunts seem, like the brook which contains his quarry, to go on for ever; but Reading races and the "plungers" who went to them a dozen years ago, where are they?

Another haunt of artist and angler is Wargrave, where the "Loddon slow, with

silver alders crown'd," slinks rather than falls into the Thames. Here is the George and Dragon Inn, for which two well-known artists painted the sign. There is much pleasant dawdling and paddling about Wargrave, and rare bathing towards Shiplake Lock, where many a time and oft I have stretched my limbs in the clear cool water, pondering, as I pulled down stream afterwards, on the fate of the author of *Mr. Barlow*, that terrible schoolmaster of Harry Sandford and Tommy Merton, who was always "improving the occasion." *Mr. Day* was a pedagogue at heart, and would always be training or breaking in something or other. His success was not quite equal to his expectations, for his experiment of wife-training broke down altogether. Nowise dashed, he tried his hand at breaking in horses, or rather at riding them in an uneducated condition. This experiment was conclusive, for a young horse ran away with him and broke his neck, a fate which the unhappy youths who have read Sandford and Merton will probably think he richly deserved.

With the orgies of Medmenham, real or imaginary, and the glories of Henley Regatta, the world is tolerably familiar; but within the last few years the aspect of the Henley celebration has changed, as much as that of the University boat-race from Putney to Mortlake. It was once a quiet gathering mainly of University and county folk, but of late the Aquatic Bedouin has marked it for his own, and the preparations for camping-out in the Henley week are on a gigantic scale. The woods and meadows from Cookham to Marsh Lock are filled with tents, sprung up like gigantic mushrooms, and tenanted by every sort and condition of riparian nomad, from him who comes armed with all the artillery of Fortnum and Mason, to the weaker brother who nourishes "the missis and the kids" on cold junk and luke-warm beer. From a genuine boat-race meeting, Henley, with its old-fashioned inn, immortalised by Shenstone, has become as much an aquatic Ascot as the great University race an aquatic Derby. Thither spurts and sputters, puffs and blows every steam-launch in going order, and the sight of Remenham-reach in the early morning before the course is cleared is a sight worth seeing. It is a sort of combination triumph of the principle of athleticism, and of that determination to make holidays, which is gaining so rapidly upon all of us Englishmen. I like holidays

myself, but being of a serious, not to say melancholy turn, am no longer at home at Henley. A solitary paddle about Cookham in the crisp days of October and early November, when Cliefden-woods have put on the thousand brilliant hues of autumn, suits my mood of mind much better than the heat and crowd and glare of Henley in June. There is plenty to see in autumn by the riverside, and to those who love animals for their own sake there are few more amusing sights than the great water-rats taking their morning bath, or sitting up like rabbits and sunning themselves at the entrance to their nests. I am aware that rats are not popular because they are destructive. But so are many more exceedingly beautiful and highly-organised creatures.

ANOTHER NATIVE GENTLEMAN.*

A STORY.

IN Malay lands the seeker after native gentility finds a choice of types. Every Malay is a gentleman in some senses of the word. He is brave and courteous, he restrains the vulgar outbreak of passion, and is very often truthful. He does not work more than he can help; and abandons to the Chinaman, if possible, all dirty occupations. His person is always cleanly; for the "orang laüt" may be called the stanchest, if least erudite, of Musulmans. He dresses as well as he can afford—better, indeed, as a rule—and his fashions are manly as graceful. What may be set against these gentlemanly traits of character I shall not here put down; for I am very fond of the Malays, and their demerits do not "come into my brief" at this moment.

After reflection, I do not think of a better example for my case than Douroup, the old executioner of Sarawak. An official of that sort is not regarded with aversion in the Far East; partly, maybe, because the mode of execution is dignified for both parties, and also because such an officer is evidently indispensable. I knew Douroup very well, before he called on me, one morning, in the pretty bungalow which Sir James Brooke had assigned to us for residence. With an air unmatched by pursuivant or chamberlain, he used to stalk upon the rajah's heels when he took a stroll, shielding that "good white head"

* ALL THE YEAR ROUND, New Series, Vol. 17, p. 280, "A Native Gentleman."

with a state-umbrella. Pleasant to behold was Douroup on these occasions. Unthinking visitors laughed to see him, but I never could perceive the joke. Grave loyalty and self-respectful performance of that which a brave old man regards as honourable duty are not absurd. A sympathetic smile one might allow oneself, but no more.

In picturesque effect Douroup could not be surpassed on these occasions. He had a stature much exceeding the average of his small race, limbs vigorous and sinewy, a thin, hard-featured countenance. His little eyes twinkled sternly under lids triangular, so deeply were they wrinkled; his large mouth was squarely set, like a trap of steel; his broad, bony jaws had an air of well-tried determination. Douroup possessed a snowy beard—what might be called a goatee, and at least two dozen hairs on each side the upper lip. Not even his umbrella of scarlet silk and fringed, nor his kris of that special shape which belongs to the executioner, distinguished him more proudly from "the herd." One Malay in a thousand may possess enough moustache to swear by, but I never saw among that people a beard like Douroup's. I have his likeness before me as I write; my drawing was photographed by Vernon Heath, of Piccadilly, fourteen years ago. It shows the old man's figure, upright as a spear, arrayed in pink cotton bajo or jersey, fitting like a glove on his gaunt muscles; petticoat of tartan, red and green, gracefully looped in folds to show the handle of his official kris; trousers snowy white, falling over bony ankles.

Thus arrayed he came to my bungalow, intent to sell a handsome "parang" of native manufacture. I admired and bought the weapon; in fact, it hangs now on my wall, with many another yet more fantastic. The bargain was apparently concluded to Douroup's satisfaction, for he laughed in grim delight, showing teeth like ebony with prismatic lights upon them.

The blackening is done with the oil of burnt cocoanut in early youth, and the foil-like appearance, so startling to newcomers, may be due to decay or to the immoderate use of penang, as the betel-nut is called by Malays.

He asked if I cared for a Lanun kris, and sent his slave-boy to fetch it, seating himself meanwhile on my invitation. He rolled a "plug" of betel, tobacco, and lime from the bamboo case hanging at his waist, enveloped it in a pepper-leaf, and began to chew gravely.

My interpreter at that time was Ali Kasut, or Ali of the Shoes, so called from his invariable habit of "sporting" that article of luxury. It was nothing less than a superstition with my excellent follower. He had the small and delicate feet of his race, but outspread at the toes by walking barefoot at an age when, of all possible extravagancies, a boot would have seemed to Ali the most absurd. This formation made him difficult to fit. No lady's shoe, such as he loved, could be too small, or too slender, or too high at the instep, but his prehensile toes demanded greater breadth to work in than would be needful for an Irish giant. Ali overcame this difficulty by slitting up the front part of the boot at either side. Thus he allowed his toes fair play, quite indifferent to appearances or utility.

Whilst the executioner surveyed me with dignity and decorum, Ali observed: "This Lanun kris at sight of rainbow betakenbe."

I should observe that my interpreter was a much-travelled man, who had dwelt at Brunei and Johore, where people who respect themselves talk "pangaran," or court Malay. The peculiarity of this speech is a redundancy of prefixes and affixes, which are used with the most delicate discrimination. Though, I believe, much more correct, it bears no greater resemblance to the common form of words than does classic Greek to Romaic, and in a very few generations it will become a dead language. Meanwhile Ali Kasut rejoiced in his accomplishment, and transferred the theory of it to English when addressing persons of importance. He told me once that the reason he did not understand great "tnans" when they spoke together, whilst he could follow easily the conversation of stray sailors and such like, was because the former spoke pangaran English, and he naturally concluded that the great difference lay in prefixes and affixes. Whence his mode of speech.

I supposed that a kind of mythological relic was to be offered me. "The kris must be very old," I said gravely.

"Oh, old. Malay man like swords olden—fifty years perhapsbe."

"And who took it?"

"He there!" the interpreter answered, pointing to Douroup.

"What!" I exclaimed. "He has fought a rainbow?"

"Tidak! Lanun man he rainbow fought-enby. Douroup he rainbow withum."

I concluded that the weapon in its way

had been drawn in sacrilegious assault of that aerial phenomenon. Douroup chewed with respectful indifference. He did not seem to take any special pride in the recollection of his victorious efforts on behalf of the rainbow.

"Was anybody hurt?" I asked, keeping my countenance.

"Lanun all killedness, but some betakenbe."

"So perish all who would attack the beneficent powers! What punishment did the rainbow inflict on those betakenbe?"

"They shotum! Rajah in Englander. He hearum madness."

"What?"

"Yes. Rajah Mudah, Captain Brooke you know, left hereaway. Old rajah in Englandness very angry when teldful. He want Lanun man alive."

It suddenly flashed upon my bewilderment that the Rainbow in question was a gunboat, which had several times been engaged with Lanun pirates. Doubtless Douroup had captured his kris in such an action. I asked for details, and my interpreter was rapidly turning the narrative into pangaran English when the executioner's boy came back.

He carried a weapon of beautiful shape and temper, nearly two feet long in the blade and an inch and a half wide, waving in graceful twists almost to the tip. The edges were sharp and bright, but an inch-broad strip of rough metal ran between them, deeply channelled and damascened. This peculiar effect is obtained, I believe, by welding hard metal into soft, and then eating into the latter with acids. The hilt was covered with silver wire, twined and plaited to imitate different sizes of string. This simple but tasteful style of ornamentation is much affected by Malay silversmiths.

Before coming to terms with the executioner for this specimen of piratic art, I begged to hear the tale hanging to it. Ali Kasut's idiom was droll, but it did not help to the clear comprehension of a story. I had need of more patience than could be asked of the most courteous reader. Done into vulgar English, Douroup's tale ran thus. I tell it in the first person, and I "colour" it a little, for the narrative reached me in a very bald state. The facts, of course, are historical:

"Two years ago," said the executioner—this adventure came to my ears in 1863—"my wife, my brother's son, and I

were returning from a visit to 'Salang Salang, where my sons had a contract for turtle-eggs. What little wind there was did not favour us, but the rajah had sent for me. We paddled and paddled. Just opposite to Sanjong Api, a large prau came suddenly in view, running fast alongshore with a stiff breeze. I said to my wife, 'If a man had been sailing thus across Sarawak bay upon the morning we were married, his heart would have died within him at sight of a vessel like that.' She said, 'Thanks to Allah and the white rajah, no pirates dare come here!'

"The prau skimmed in like a shark. When we looked again there were two more behind it; when we looked a third time there were seven in sight, all flying towards us. My wife said, 'Thirty years have passed since our wedding-day, and Allah is merciful; but I wish we stood all safe ashore at Santubong!' We turned the canoe and paddled for life. One after another the praus came round Sanjong Api until the bay was crowded with them. We set sail, but they flew. Within an hour the Balignini trained a jingal on us, but the ball fell short. I said to my wife, 'Will you live to be a pirate's slave?' 'Kill me,' she said. We went on with sail and paddle, but it seemed hopeless.

"Suddenly the Badger gunboat appeared, steering down the river with all sails set. We shouted and embraced each other, for sure the Balignini would clear off at sight of a gunboat. But they did not notice. The foremost prau fired again, and the ball took off Kassim's head. He fell upon my wife, nearly upsetting the canoe.

"The Badger held on, steering between us, but she could not have arrived in time. A great black prau swept towards us on the wind. Her bows were shaped as a dragon's head, and the white water looked like teeth in her jaws. The pearl of two immense natuna shells made eyes. From their fighting deck the pirates yelled at us, but fired no more. The reis of the Badger saw our distress and discharged a twelve-pound gun. The shot flashed from wave to wave and buried itself half a mile beyond. But the warning was enough. The Balignini stood dumfounded for an instant, their silk scarves fluttering in the breeze, then shook their weapons at the gunboat with a sudden gleam like fire. They ran up and down their fighting-

deck, and chanted their war-song, but they turned, all the fleet, firing as they went. The little Badger followed till afternoon, when the swift pirates had all vanished. They quitted Sarawak waters, and at Port Sirik caught a lot of British subjects—Indians. And at Port Malludu they met a fleet of Lanuns from Sulu, and cruised in company till part of them went home.

"I buried Kassim at Kuching, and my wife did not long survive the fright. The rajah consoled me, but I made spells for the Balignini. Allah, the All-Merciful, saw my distress.

"After the New Year's feast, the rajah sent me to Muka, where I had kinsfolk. My heart was water, and grief had dried my marrow. One day a boat came flying up the river; fear sat upon the faces of the crew. They brought a message for Tuan Helms. Six Lanun praus, lying in the bay, challenged him to come and fight. The people fainted; their cry rang to heaven. Tuan Helms summoned the chief men. We met in the fort, and the tuan spoke to us. He said: 'The Rajah Mudah is lying at Bintulu with the Rainbow. Here is a letter; who will carry it?'

"The Datus looked to the ground in thought, for across the river mouth lay six pirate vessels, swift as eagles. Twenty men kept watch on each of them night and day. Tuan Helms said: 'I cannot go, for my hands are soft and white, unused to paddle. But you are nobles and chiefs, skilful in the water. The people feed you, and they faint in alarm. Who will go?'

"They did not speak, and he said again: 'The man who does it will be honoured amongst all the orang laüt; the Rajah Mudah will set him on high. Your forefathers were brave. They did not fear death. Have their sons become women?'

"I rose and spoke: 'These men of Muka are not my people, oh tuan! But I hear the helpless ones who cry. Give me a fast canoe and I will carry the letter.'

"They found me the swiftest boat in Muka, the Anak Ular (young snake), which had won every race on New Year's feast. At dusk I set out. The imau laid it upon all the faithful that they should pray the saints to intercede for me all night. Every house in Muka had its candle burning, and the murmur of prayers reached Allah's throne. He

heard them. His hand drew clouds across the sky, and opened the sluices of the rain. All through the evening it fell softly, and the Lanun scouts lay close.

"In an hour and a half, for I reconnoitred at each turning of the stream, I saw open water and the praus. They lay anchored, four across the bar, and one beneath each bank, lit up as for a feast. The rolling waves glittered for a hundred yards around. Big fires blazed on shore also. Canoes came and went. At the bows of every vessel a crowd of pirates sat or moved, black against the light, and on the fighting-deck above stood the sentries. Roaring laughter echoed in faint bursts across the surge, with singing, and sharp screams of pain.

"I knew not what to do. After an hour's waiting, the mirth and the confusion only grew. If I could safely approach the fires ashore, and appear to start from thence, it seemed likely I might get through unnoticed, for there were many boats like mine passing to and fro.

"My heart was dry as an empty kernel when I stole across the river, and dropped down under shadow of the bank. The noise grew louder and louder in my ears, the light more dangerous. Suddenly, at the spit, I came on a throng of canoes which the Lanuns had surprised. There should be one sentry, at least, over them. Long I peered into the dark, and at length perceived him sitting under a tree. Not an alligator could have floated past and he not see it, in that blaze of light. I drew back, landed, and crept behind him like a serpent. The sweat poured off me. At length I reached the tree, rose up, and found he was asleep.

"Weh! I could have killed the dog. My kris was in my hand, and I know where the life divides under a man's shoulder. But it was dark beneath the trees. My hand might miss: he might cry. I took the spear beside him, and hung a cloth upon it, before his eyes. Then I quickly regained my canoe, passed without notice, and drew as close to the fire as I dared.

"There were dozens of men round it, slaves tied to trees, and pirates. A big Lanun was singing and beating the tom-tom; his surong and head-handkerchief glittered with gold. There were women, too, attending on them. I took my paddle and steered boldly out, to pass between the farthest vessels towards Bintulu. At

that moment I knew of a truth that Allah heard our prayers, for the rain descended suddenly in a great splash, and the camp broke up, laughing and shouting. Those on board also ran to cover, all except the sentries above. I dared not look up, but as I passed along I felt they were watching me.

"I hoped to slip between the third and fourth praus, which were very large, carrying eighty warriors at least. Then would come the moment of danger. The beating of my heart sounded louder than the rattling of the rain. As I passed between, looking out for cables, I saw again that black dragon's head and the big pearl eyes. The paddle almost slipped from my hand. At that instant the sentries hailed. I could frame no words to answer, but pulled with all my might. They rushed and trampled over the deck, seeking their guns, which had been placed under cover. They shouted for a canoe, and I heard them vaulting into it from above.

"The Anak Ular never made a race like that, with Lanun balls pattering round her, and the clank of Lanun paddles in her wake. But at ten yards' distance I was out of sight, so sheeted fell the rain. When it ceased, twenty minutes after, there was no boat on the sea but mine. I spread my wet carpet, and bowed myself times seventy-seven.

"In a day and a half I reached Bintulu. The Rajah Mudah gave me honour before all the people. Then he whitened the steamer, deck and funnel, got up fires with dry wood, and started. We hoped to find the praus still lying before Muka. But some foolish youths there, catching a party of scouts, sent one of them back with defiance to say the Rainbow was at hand. So they broke up at once, half putting to sea, half skirting the coast, in hopes to hide when they saw the steamer's smoke on the horizon. So had they often escaped the English cruisers. But our Rajah Mudah knew their tricks, and all the coast was afire. A swift boat came to warn him, and we held alongshore, when each village sent us news or signalled. For such insults as that of the Balignini a year before, and now this of the Lanuns, had not been dreamt of in Sarawak since the rajah chastised them.

"After two days' search we came upon three praus, making for the open water. They saw that no safety could be found alongshore, nor did they recognise the

steamer till too late for most of them, for she made no smoke, and the whitening deceived the dogs. Weh! the Lanuns are seamen! They turned back, flying like hawks. The Rainbow is swift, but she could never have caught them had the wind been fair. We got within range, and they dodged and twisted, swinging the big praus round as on a pivot. His Highness himself trained the guns, but could not hit those magic craft. 'Go ahead, full speed!' he cried at last; 'Give them the stem!'

"We went ahead—we whizzed through the sea. The shore lay only two miles off or so. The Lanuns saw what was meant. In their silks and gold cloths they gathered on the fighting-deck, a gallant show, and chanted their war-song. We came up to the first through a storm of bullets. The bowsprit pierced that crowd of men. We saw a hell of faces just beneath, flashing crises, pistols smoking. The slaves screamed below, the pirates yelled above. A shock and a grating noise! The prau went down cut in two. Then it was fighting hand to hand. They swarmed along the bowsprit, swords in teeth. They leaped and clung upon our taffrail. We met them. 'To the next!' cried His Highness, whilst we fought, and 'Aye, aye, sir!' Tuan Hewat shouted back. The decks had been scarcely cleared when another prau was overtaken. Only few of us could reach the forecabin in time, and fifty warriors at least leaped aboard. It was well that the Rajah Mudah had embarked a hundred trusty warriors at Bintulu, for the Lanuns fought as they and fiends of Eblis only can.

"'Go ahead!' His Highness cried, in the midst of it, and we went ahead. Half our deck was held by pirates. They fell, one by one, amok to the last, but the third prau escaped among the shallows. We sent a few shots after it whilst steaming away, and killed a great chief. Our people watched, and not a man who landed was alive in half an hour. But the worst of them kept the sea in a small boat, and when the Rainbow had passed by they fled safely to their homes in Sulu.

"We stopped only to pick up swimming slaves, but lost several orang laut on that duty. For the Lanuns beckoned and cried pitifully, keeping their arms under water. When a man reached to save one of them he stabbed or threw his arms about him, and dragged him out, and sank, so that we helped no one who could not pull himself on board by a rope.

"In the night some of the slaves told us what rich plunder had been sent to the bottom of the sea. His Highness said, laughing, 'If any of you orang laüt like to jump aboard the last prau, and take what you can, I give you leave!' 'And white men, too, sir?' asked the tuan engineer. 'Everyone but Captain Hewat,' said His Highness; 'he will get his reward from Government!' Next morning we caught the rest of the pirate fleet, and fired no shot, but steered into them. The first prau and the second we ran down without much loss. When it came to the last it was the dragon craft! I crawled out on the bowsprit, as did others, but they fell, splash, splash! before the Lanun fire. The Rainbow spun along, and when she almost touched the pirate vessel, the tuan engineer came crushing through our men, swung himself on the bowsprit, and forced by me. We shot into the thickest of the Lanuns. Weh, tuan! I thought the Afreets had my body! They now pressed too close to strike. The white man tumbled amongst them with a shout, snatching here a golden-hilted kris, there a jewelled dagger. I got nothing but a stab on the shoulder—see?—and this tulu blade which I offer to you, tuan. Look you, the tuan engineer was very big and stout. The Lanun man could not hold against his weight. He secured two handfuls of fine things in an instant, and then down, down we went, as if to the very bottom of the sea. And what will you give me for the kris, tuan?"

I forget what I gave him, but his story seemed cheap at the price. The kris hangs in a place of honour on my wall.

DOUBLEDAY'S CHILDREN.

BY DUTTON COOK,

AUTHOR OF "YOUNG MR. NIGHTINGALE," "ROBSON'S CHOICE," &c. &c.

BOOK V. THE FURTHER NARRATIVE OF BASIL DOUBLEDAY.

CHAPTER VI. I GO A JOURNEY.

I COULD not really question the honesty or the honour of Paul. It was not merely that he was my brother-in-law, the husband of Doris, and dearly loved by her; there was something about the man that forbad and repelled the slur of suspicion. The faults and defects of his character did not incline towards treachery or cruelty.

Yet originally, I own I had viewed him

with some disfavour; although we had met at Mr. Gridale's house, breathing the same atmosphere of political enthusiasm, and were engaged in writing for the same newspaper; although he professed revolutionary sentiments, and was an exile because of his opinions. Assuredly he was on these accounts entitled to my regard. Nevertheless I found myself prejudiced against him. He seemed to me without genuine earnestness for the cause he advocated; he possessed a certain gift of words, and could speak with bitter scorn of his political foes, could describe eloquently the wrongs and sufferings of his country; but I judged him to be a rebel out of sheer indolence and the cynicism that is born of persistent ill-fortune; a dilettante conspirator to whom revolt against constituted authority was not a trade so much as an entertainment. He regarded revolutions as many Englishmen esteemed the Charter, as the one indispensable, unfailing panacea; making its absence an excuse for much sloth and many follies, for mocking neglect of every other duty, for dull apathy touching every other topic, and meantime active only in disaffection, in seditious speeches, and treasonous practices. Until he could benefit mankind according to his own prescriptions, he was content to sit idly apart, cherishing the whiteness of his hands, toying with cigarettes and dominoes in cheap coffee-houses, working only to provide himself with the poorest necessities of life.

He was an instance, as I thought, of the ruinous effects of the traditions of rebellion and discontent—handed down like an hereditary disease from one generation to another. In such wise his life had been absolutely wasted. Certainly it was strange that I, accused of being so half-hearted a political partisan, should in my turn be charging Paul Riel with insufficient fervour. But I judged foolishly and purblindly in the matter. Paul's faults were in truth to be ascribed to the wrongs inflicted upon his family and upon himself. The results of injustice are not easily stayed and localised; they extend oftentimes through the ages, striking and wounding the innocent even at remote distances. From his earliest years Paul had been taught to believe himself, his sire and grandsire before him, the victims of tyranny and oppression. A sense of injustice had grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength, the while it had rankled within

him like a poison, now drugging him into drowsiness, now inflaming him into mad acts of rebellion.

And a further confession I am about to make. I believed, in the first instance, that Paul Riel loved Catalina. She was so beautiful, it seemed to me, that all who approached her must become her lovers. I loved her, and my love made me jealous and suspicious. Moreover, Paul was so handsome; if he loved her I persuaded myself that he would not love in vain. This view of Paul did not commend him to my good opinion. At times I was tempted to hate him because of his handsome face and the irresistible air of romance that seemed to attend upon him, and because there appeared to be such great danger of Catalina loving him.

As a matter of fact, Paul had not loved Catalina, nor had Catalina loved Paul. In both, perhaps, admiration had been stirred, but not affection. Hearts are constituted and governed mysteriously. Here the arrows of love pierce through and through; here they fall as upon adamant, and are flung off blunted and broken, leaving no dint or scratch behind them. Here are men ready to lay down their lives for this woman, whom these others pronounce wholly uncharming, and pass by as though she were the merest of lay figures.

As a child I loved Catalina—the reader has been so informed in the earlier portion of this chronicle—and I loved her still, and more and more as the days went by, and I passed from youth to manhood. Her store of beauty had increased, and yet I counted it her chief charm that she had changed so little. Something of the wonted loveliness of childhood had from the first been absent from her face, always finely shaped, with a distinct grace of outline pertaining to complete growth, and occupied at times by curiously grave looks, plaintive and thoughtful expressions. She was still “the little girl next door,” for all her greater majesty of stature and movement and more womanly symmetry; she was still the delight of her grandsire and the sunshine of his house, sharing the animation of his sentiments, and aiding him in his editorial labours; while I adored her still as when I was a poet in a pinafore, writing verses in her honour, if my devotion had now acquired maturer form and substantiality. My love for Catalina had made me a poet—if consistently with modesty I may so describe myself; and perhaps it was owing to the same influ-

ence that I became a democrat; desire to win her favour shaping my political convictions and colouring my writings, until at last Cupid had little difficulty in presenting me to the world as a Chartist.

I had not told her of my love. Perhaps a boyish diffidence restrained me, or I feared my speech might break a spell, and end a dream that was very full of happiness. For the while it was sufficient to me to see her, to be near her. I worshipped not the less sincerely because of my closed lips. The pleasure of loving her was not diminished by the fact that she did not know of my love. My only pains arose from dread of the advance of other suitors. For a long time I noted, with a sort of gnawing jealousy, my brother Nick's manifest admiration of her. I knew that he professed love for her. And while I denounced his love as unworthy of her, I greatly dreaded the effect of his good looks, for he was as handsome as Paul Riel.

My poverty, too, hindered me; and I shrank from seeming treachery towards Mr. Grisdale. For a long time I had difficulty in earning the merest subsistence. Could I ask her to become my wife merely to starve with me? Could I bring desolation upon Mr. Grisdale's home by stealing away his Lina?

But perhaps the strongest reason for holding my peace was that I did not love hopefully. I could perceive in Catalina no return of the affection I lavished upon her; it seemed to glance off and fall from her, leaving her wholly uninfluenced—as small missiles might strike harmlessly against chain-mail. Apparently she was unconscious of the fact of my love. She regarded me simply as a friend. She would not or could not see that I was also a lover.

There were symptoms of violent agitation in France. A political crisis appeared to be imminent.

“It is not only a question of changing the ministry,” said Mr. Grisdale; “the ball has been set rolling—where is it to stop? The people, constrained to take arms against the Government, will not be content with moderate reforms. France is mined; the air is charged with electricity; the muttering of the coming storm is already audible; the explosion is very near now. Already the ground is trembling beneath the feet of the king and his ministers.”

“What has happened?” I asked. Mr.

Grisdale's figurative method of speech was sometimes very confusing.

"The right of public meeting has been denied; the law has been outraged; the reform banquets are to be suppressed by brute force; liberty is in danger; the garrison of Paris has been largely increased. It seems to me that the days of July are coming over again, and that Louis Philippe is to fall as fell Charles the Tenth; that Guizot is to share the fate of Prince Polignac. Retributive justice! The oppressors of the people are sooner or later its victims."

A messenger handed me a letter. It was from the editor of *The Hourglass*. He requested to see me as soon as possible; and in the interests of the paper, and as its special correspondent, begged me to be ready to start for Paris by the night mail. A passport, I was told, would be provided for me.

"Ça ira," said Mr. Grisdale, gleefully rubbing his hands. "The *Hourglass* must have later news, better news, than has yet reached me. It is clear that France is shifting its neck from beneath the ministers' feet. The nation is moving, is uplifting itself, is advancing—woe to those who stand in its way! Basil, it seems to me that I can smell gunpowder, that I can already hear the clashing of swords. There are fifty thousand troops in Paris. Well, there is a nation to fight against them. But the thing promises to be very serious. You will go, of course? It is a magnificent chance for you."

"Yes, of course. I must go; but——"

"But what?"

"I dread to leave Doris."

"Have no fear on that score. Trust her to me, to Catalina."

"She will not think me cruel? What am I saying? No; she will rejoice at my going. I may bring her tidings of Paul."

"Ah yes, you may hear something of Paul," said Mr. Grisdale, abstractedly.

"I can arrange, no doubt, to have part of my salary as correspondent paid to Doris. I cannot go away with the thought that she may be in want."

"You talk idly, Basil. Do you know me so little? Have you no faith in Lina? Doris shall be our charge, she shall want for nothing. It will rejoice us to care for and cherish her, and so to make your mind easy while you are far from us. But—there is another thing—you spoke of Paul. You are resolved to find him if you can? I may take that for granted? Hush! We must not be overheard, this is really im-

portant. I think I can help you to find Paul." He reduced his voice to a mysterious whisper. "At least I can put you in the right way to enquire concerning him. Now listen attentively. Commit what I say to memory, but do not write down a word of it, for written documents are cruel evidence against one sometimes. When you are in Paris you will go to No. 13, Rue St. Benoit. On the sixth floor you will find a young artist, M. George Guichardet. You will introduce yourself to him. You will mention my name to him. You will tell him plainly what you want. Have no fear; he will frankly assist you not only as to Paul, but in regard to your correspondence, especially if you show him this."

He took from his pocket a small flat piece of copper of a triangular shape. I read engraved upon it the words, "Union, Honneur, Patrie." On the other side of it appeared, "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité."

"You need not know fully what this signifies. It will be sufficient for you that it procures you the information you seek. Only it will be well for you to be discreet in exhibiting it. France is full of spies. The agent of police will be always at your elbow. Be circumspect, and be silent. It is always the talkers who get into trouble. Strike a blow for liberty, if you can; but remember it is not as a combatant you go to France, but as a correspondent, and a good cause can oftentimes be as well served by the pen as by the sword."

I spoke to Doris of my errand to Paris. She could hardly be persuaded that my character as correspondent was not assumed, and that I was journeying with any other object than to look for Paul.

"Basil, how good of you! You will find him for me, will you not? I may trust you? You are so calm and composed, but you are brave, too, and I know you will spare no effort to find him. Basil, you have made me so happy! Think how wretched I must have been when even the thought of the chance of your seeing Paul once more brings tears of joy into my eyes! And you will write to me in any case?"

I assured her that I would write as often as possible.

"Paul promised to write," she said, "but no letter has come to me. Surely you will keep faith with me, Basil? Because you know you have seen for yourself how miserable it makes me, how it kills me to be without news—to be waiting, waiting for letters that never come—it breaks my heart, it breaks my heart! If you don't

write, Basil, I shall follow you and find out Paul for myself. But you will write. And when you see Paul, as you will—you must see him—you will note how he looks and what he says, and treasure up his every word to tell me again. I shall want to know everything about him. Nothing that concerns him can be too trivial to interest me. Fill pages of your letters with news of Paul. Promise me that you will, Basil."

"And have you no message for me to take to him?"

"Message? Of course I have; a hundred and more. Tell him that I love him—but he knows that, he won't want to be told that. Tell him that he has been very cruel not to write to me. No, don't tell him that. I can't send him reproaches. I can only send him kind words. But tell him to write to me; tell him to love me always; tell him, above all things, to come back to me; tell him to come quickly to his poor, fond, heart-broken wife, and"—she hid her face in my breast as she whispered—"to his child that has yet to be born!"

Poor darling, how her cheeks burned, when I kissed her, and said good-bye to her!

Mr. Grisdale took hearty leave of me. "Heaven speed you, Basil," he said; "we shall be glad to have you home again safe and sound."

"Is there danger?" asked Catalina, with something of a start.

"They say every bullet has its billet," said Mr. Grisdale. "But Basil goes to write, not to fight."

"After all it may come to nothing," I observed.

"It may be a mere flash in the pan. But you are going to the land of revolutions, and I count upon a real explosion. As I said before, I think I smell gunpowder. I wish I were going with you."

Catalina looked at him and sighed. Her face was unusually pale.

It was in the train, proceeding to Dover, that I read with surprise in an evening newspaper an announcement of the death of Miss Leveridge, "suddenly, at her residence in Powis-place, Queen's-square, Bloomsbury." Poor Miss Leveridge!

A few more hours and I am in Paris, the tenant of a furnished apartment on the fourth floor of a tall house in the Faubourg

Poissonnière. It is a very small room, and is chiefly occupied by a large stove of white china; but it is fitted up with a sort of cheap luxuriousness in the way of muslin curtains, looking-glasses of a green tinge, unsafe easy chairs and a gilt clock that does not go. I am convinced, however, that I have chosen my lodgings with sound judgment, and with praiseworthy regard for economy. I have discovered, too, that I can dine cheaply at Byron's Tavern, an English house at the back of the Opéra Comique.

From my window I look over certain outbuildings, of low elevation, and obtain a view of the busy courtyard of a large hotel. I can hear the frequent ringing of bells, and see the hurrying hither and thither of waiters and chambermaids and other servants. I can note, too, the proprietor, who sits smoking in a summer house, sipping sugar and water, and otherwise very idle.

On the door-post, as I entered, I noted scrawled in lead pencil, and apparently half erased, the familiar words, "Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité." They had not been firmly written, and they had not been effaced with decision. Apparently the time had not come for dealing strongly with them either one way or the other.

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